

COMMISSIONERS APPROVAL

CHILCOTT *gc*

LUND *BL*

THOMPSON *AT*

TAYLOR (Clerk & Recorder)

Date.....September 11, 2006

Members Present.....Commissioner Greg Chilcott, Commissioner Betty Lund and Commissioner Alan Thompson

Minutes: Sally Fortino and Glenda Wiles

The Board of County Commissioners met for an update on the Aquatic facility and possible decision on the Park District budget. Dusty Williams, Don Contraman, and Fern Schreckengust were present from the Aquatic Center; Pat Zeiler, Robert Cron, Gary Leese and William Delaney of the Park Board; Tonia Bloom, Mr. & Mrs. Richard Temple and Chris Palin, interested residents were present. Dusty Williams said the intent of the phone message left on the Aquatic Center's voice mail was to let the Board of County Commissioners know that people are interested in the pool.

Commissioner Thompson said he is frustrated that this condition (lack of monies to run the pool) has existed for some time, yet this is the first time the Commissioners' assistance has been sought. He said one of the board members has been quoted as saying that they have been operating in the red for some time. The Board of County Commissioners should have been informed earlier. Park Board District Two should probably ask for an increase in the mil levy.

Dusty said they are seeking an increase of \$100,000, for a total of \$175,000. He explained their operating budget is \$250,000, but it costs about \$280,000 to run the facility. They were making \$100,000 in revenue from season passes, etc. The increase is required because equipment needs replacing, etc. They need operating funds in the bank, as equipment ages. They guessed at the need when they arrived at the original levy of \$75,000. No one had hard information about operating costs. The indoor pool is a therapy pool; specific temperatures must be maintained. Utilities have increased in price, as have pool supplies. They feel comfortable that that present monetary request is sufficient.

Commissioner Thompson asked if the Park District is audited annually. Dusty said it is; they are seeking someone whose fees are lower. The district is required to have a yearly audit only if it makes \$200,000 per year. Commissioner Thompson asked if any staff member has the financial understanding to discuss financial issues. Dusty said no; they seek counsel as needed.

Commissioner Thompson asked the earliest possible re-opening for the Aquatic Center if the mill levy is passed. Dusty said they are trying to open the doors now. They don't want to wait until January when the semi-annual tax payment is made. To open the doors now and keep them open through January would require \$20,000. The timing of tax payments has caused them to run in the red from the beginning. The lag between expenses and tax payments has caused problems.

Commissioner Thompson asked what they expect from the Commissioners. Dusty said they are looking for advice and funding. Commissioner Thompson said legally Park District Two is an independent political entity. There is no way the Board of County Commissioners could give or loan money to the Park District. There may be a possibility of getting money from the County Park Board.

Gary Leese asked if the Park District would like to be overseer of the other parks in the Hamilton/Corvallis area. Various statements insinuate they control a larger area than they seem to want responsibility for. He suggested members of the Park District attend the Park Board meeting to discuss available solutions to their dilemma, adding that no effort had been made to contact the Park Board.

Commissioner Thompson said he asked civil counsel particular questions regarding why the Inter-local Agreement has remained unsigned. The Park District has control over what happens in the Hamilton/Corvallis area, though they have no authority to sell land. Civil Counsel has advised that moneys should be requested from the Park Board, not from the Board of County Commissioners.

Commissioner Chilcott said the signed Inter-local Agreement would be required before any loan could be considered. Dusty said the Inter-local Agreement should be signed now. Commissioner Chilcott said the document has remained unsigned for several months. Dusty said they had trouble securing needed advice.

Commissioner Thompson said he did not really agree with legal counsel that the Aquatic Center should be controlling parklands. The easy way to simplify the matter is to get the agreement signed. Dusty said they just want to be Bitterroot Aquatic Center.

Commissioner Chilcott asked how revenue is generated presently. Dusty said people buy classes, individual swim lessons, therapy, and open swimming; people pay to use the pool.

Commissioner Chilcott said the figures given still indicate a shortfall of \$105,000. Dusty said the budget has been cut. They know what revenues are coming in, plus donations through fundraising, which hasn't been made a part of the budget because there is no guarantee of those funds. He suggested the Aquatic Center might consider offering naming rights to the facility, similar to what the Fair Board did with the Event Pavilion. Naming rights might generate some revenue.

Gary asked if the Park District would like to be placed on the agenda for the next Park Board meeting and if so, who the spokesperson would be. Dusty said he would like to be on the agenda, and he would be spokesperson for the Aquatic Center.

Richard Temple said he doesn't understand the finances of this operation. These are public funds, yet a private group is responsible for them. Commissioner Lund said they have an elected board; they are not a private entity.

Richard asked why there is such a huge gap between the estimated cost and actual cost, and what will happen to the facility if the mil levy fails to pass. Dusty said the original estimate was their best guess. Three years of operating data have now accrued. Utility costs and gas prices skyrocketed. More lifeguards were needed. Residents didn't envision all the things the pool could provide for the community. They have three years of reality now. They had no advertising budget. They would like to let the community know what they provide. Some programs pay for themselves, some don't. Instructors are the best advertisers for the classes they conduct. Actual expenses were unknown. If the levy doesn't pass, one option is to change to a summer-only facility, which is what most pools are.

Gary said their original request was \$75,000; this has remained the same, though expenses have changed. The levy amount has been reduced per taxpayer, but revenue has not risen.

Commissioner Chilcott said they wanted to do a mil instead of a set amount, but they were not allowed to do it. They should lobby to have it tied to the mil so it could increase.

Robert said it would appear the requested funds will be insufficient. Dusty said they don't want taxes to run the pool. That is our responsibility. They aren't asking for everything they need to cover the budget because they know they have some money coming in toward running expenses. The amount requested would allow them to re-open and stay open. Robert asked that Dusty come to the Park Board meeting armed with pertinent figures.

Pat Zeiler asked if the mil increase is a permanent thing. Dusty said it would be in perpetuity until the Park District Board says it is no longer needed.

Fern Shreckengust, pool manager, said pools don't make money. Charging actual costs would eliminate many perspective swimmers. The pool is a service to the community. It costs money to have a pool. Employees are required to attend training programs. The pump room and the employees are the biggest expenses at the Aquatic Center.

Commissioner Chilcott asked if demographic data is maintained on consumers. Fern said the majority of consumers fall into two groups: 55+ and under age twelve. Dusty said they are working with schools in the area; Washington Elementary is bringing students to classes.

Robert said most public pools are tax-supported. Mrs. Temple, a fibro myalgia patient and a member of the pool, said the waters are warmer, more therapeutic. Many swimmers have

health conditions requiring warmer waters for therapeutic reasons. Commissioner Lund said this comment is heard frequently.

Chris Palin said she was not here when the pool was voted on. She asked the original intent of the public pool. Dusty said it was intended to provide a year-round aquatic facility, with public construction and use.

Chris said if the intent was to serve the public as a whole, and if running at higher water temperatures is for physical therapy or younger people, then they are leaving out the general public. It is failing because it is not serving the total public. Fern said the indoor pool is not a lap pool. There is no diving. The other pools need to be completed. Dusty said the original plan had 3 pools: 2 indoor and one outdoor pool. The indoor pool has morphed into things not in the original thought. There is no other pool in the area that operates as this indoor pool, with therapeutic advantages. He went on to explain some of the aspects of the pool, as it contributes to the uses of the general public. The plan is to be a recreation facility and a destination place for people in Ravalli County.

Commissioner Chilcott asked the cost to maintain the higher water temperature. Dusty said he has no relative data; the temperature has remained the same since the beginning.

Tonia Bloom said she is interested in recreation. Part of the business plan included enclosing the large pool. It was made viable because of the planned expansion. Commissioner Lund said a grant was to contain the cost of expansion and pool covering. That grant will be resurrected. Dusty said the Aquatic Center expected to depend on a grant instead of taxes for finances. They need the extra pool space for some of the intended programs.

Tonia asked if fees are increased for members using physical therapy. Fern said they pay the same amount.

Chris suggested that could be an opportunity to generate revenue. It is a specific service. She asked if they continue using the pool after rehabilitation. Fern said such data had not been collected.

Tonia said it sounds like this is to clarify the pool district. She asked who ultimately owns this and is responsible. Commissioner Lund said the ballot language created the park district; the intent was to create an aquatic center. The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is between Park District Two and the Park Board. Don said there have been bonds purchased to cover the costs of the pool; bond-holders would foreclose if the pool should fail. Commissioner Lund said it is a \$1,800,000 bond, with another 15 years to maturity.

In other business, the Board of County Commissioners met with residents of Mill Creek regarding property being unlawfully used as a lumberyard and junkyard; Wes Miles acted as spokesman. There are no sanitary facilities. He met with the original owners of the logging operations, who said they would relocate the operation within 6-12 months. They achieved that goal in eight months. During that time the operation slowly diminished.

Over the summer things have accelerated again, on Olson's property, but the operators are not the original operators of the logging operation. There have been numerous complaints over the years. An RV has provided sanitary facilities, but the vehicle doesn't appear to have been moved. Therefore, it is unlikely the holding tank has been emptied properly. A Sheriff's Deputy may need to accompany a sanitarian on a site visit.

Commissioner Chilcott commented that legal counsel and a member of the Planning Department would be required at the meeting to determine probable cause. They said probable cause must be established, and it would be unwise to proceed without benefit of legal counsel. He has the name of the person presently running the logging operation, but is not sure that the individual is aware of the history of the property. The property is still owned by the Olson's.

Commissioner Chilcott said a motion was made in a previous meeting to request that the Department of Environmental Health investigate the matter. He asked Theresa Blazicevich if that investigation took place. Theresa said her department conducted an investigation. There is not too much that can be done with the logging operation; they require a storm water drainage permit be secured from DEQ. The man responsible for the junk cars and trailer was contacted, and he allowed the junk cars to be removed; nothing has happened with the trailer. A septic permit cannot be legally obtained for the site; the trailer remains there. Theresa has been on site once with permission of whoever was there.

Commissioner Chilcott asked if written complaints have been received to build a probable cause case for a warrant. Wes felt writing more complaints wasn't the way to go, but Commissioner Chilcott said it might be necessary to start over if this is a new operation. Wes said the new logging operation has an outhouse. Junk vehicles and lack of a sewer system are what involves Environmental Health. Then there is the public nuisance issue. Commissioner Chilcott asked if dust abatement had been applied, as was agreed upon. Wes said it has not been applied by Mr. Ralls, head of the new logging operations.

Commissioner Thompson said they had met with Mr. Ralls and everyone. Then they discovered he doesn't own it, and then the owners came in and said they would buy the property and move the yard. But that hasn't happened, either. Wes said people owned the operation but not the land. They were honorable people. They were very honest, lived by their word. Now someone else has restarted it, but Olson's still own the land.

Commissioner Thompson said he had heard that petroleum was being released into the water. Theresa said DEQ sent an inspector. Wes said a list of chemicals was found, but proving the source would be cost prohibitive.

Commissioner Thompson said the Board of County Commissioners need to offer assistance if there is something wrong, but they were under the impression that the problem had been solved. Legal counsel and the Planning Department wanted to reschedule this meeting to a time when they could attend, but it wasn't possible. Wes said they have tried to be patient and work with the people involved.

Commissioner Chilcott suggested they move forward to get a voluntary zoning district established. An existing business cannot be zoned out. However, once they move the land can be used for something more suitable to the area.

Theresa said she might involve the State with the junk vehicle issue. Commissioner Chilcott said it is offensive that taxpayers subsidize the junk salvage car business. Theresa said she would get the State involved in a storm water discharge permit. Someone is living in the trailer or the building; the County attorney's help will be required to get them out of there. There are no proper sewage facilities. If the trailer wasted water was being dumped at an RV dumpsite they wouldn't be so nervous about it. Wes said Mr. Olson has always gotten away with this form of operation and thinks he always will.

Commissioner Lund said they would check with James and determine the course of action. Commissioner Chilcott said the previous motion still stands. Theresa said the State could require a motor vehicle wrecking license.

Roy Athern said the site is operated late at night, trucks stop in the center of the road, and the heavy loads destroy the road. Commissioner Lund suggested that Theresa and James put something together.

Commissioner Chilcott said the Planning Department is working with a Corvallis group to get a voluntary zoning district together. The name of the man suspected of maintaining the present operation is Tim Mangolt (546-6688). Commissioner Chilcott asked when the new operation started. Wes said it didn't actually ever stop. Commissioner Thompson wondered if the transaction was legal and were they encumbered by the previous agreement to stop operations. Tonia said, on the issue of zoning, a good deal of property is in zoning districts. The entire Corvallis school district is looking into zoning.

In other business the Commissioners participated in a Salary Compensation Board meeting.

The Board met for various administrative matters that included the following: Commissioner Lund made a motion to approve of a commercial lease for Hangar #317 by addendum. Commissioner Thompson seconded the motion and all voted "aye".

Commissioner Thompson made a motion to approve of Hangar lease #20 to ISO (Doug Nelson) by bill of sale from Bill Stewart. Commissioner Lund seconded the motion and all voted "aye".

Commissioner Thompson made a motion to have the Chairman sign the DEQ contract for Air Quality monitoring. Commissioner Lund seconded the motion and all voted "aye"

The Board spent the remainder of the day in budget preparation.

Commissioner Lund attended a 9-1-1 meeting during the early evening.